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CC:
Subject: Scranton Times-Tribune (11-14) Federal environmental and health agencies collect data from Dimock families

Federal environmental and health agencies collect data from Dimock families

By Laura Legere (Staff Writer)
Published: November 14, 2011

Read more: <http://thetimes-tribune.com/news/federal-environmental-and-health-agencies-collect-data-from-dimock-families-1.1232280#ixzz1dgm5WsBI>

Officials from federal environmental and public health agencies met with residents of Dimock Twp. late last week to discuss the impacts of Marcellus Shale natural gas drilling and to gather water-test results from families affected by methane migration.

Three representatives from the Environmental Protection Agency and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry visited Thursday with families around Carter Road, an area of Susquehanna County where state regulators have linked increased methane in water supplies to faulty natural gas wells.

"They are looking to see if there is any environmental impact that would threaten life or health," Dimock resident Scott Ely said.

Efforts to reach an EPA spokeswoman were unsuccessful Friday, when government offices were closed for Veterans Day.

Natural gas drilling is largely regulated in Pennsylvania by the state Department of Environmental Protection, but the EPA is conducting a multiyear study to determine if there is a link between hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, and contaminated water supplies.

The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry is an arm of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that works to prevent exposures to toxic substances.

Dimock resident Victoria Switzer said the agencies were interested in copies of water-sample results from her well, including data gathered by scientists not affiliated with the state or drilling contractors.

She also outlined her concerns that DEP weakened enforcement actions against Cabot Oil and Gas Corp., the operator DEP deemed responsible for increased methane in water supplies. Cabot denies it impacted the water. Efforts to reach a DEP spokeswoman were unsuccessful Friday.

Contact the writer: llegere@timeshamrock.com

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